

Turn Your Radio On

by Jerry L. Venable

"Come and listen in to a radio station, Where the mighty hosts of heaven sing... From the land of endless spring Turn the lights down low and listen to the Master's radio Listen to the songs of the fathers and the mothers And the many friends gone before Turn you radio on and listen to the music in the air Get in touch with God turn your radio on."¹

We've certainly all heard the simple lyrics and delightful sing-along melody of this gospel song for many years. And why not, its been recorded by artists including Roy Acuff, Johnny Cash, Wanda Jackson, Reba McIntire, The Statler Brothers, Elvis, and probably the best selling recording of the song by Ray Stevens. The song was written by a prolific gospel song writer by the name of Albert E. Brumley, son of an Oklahoma sharecropper. From these humble roots in 1905, Brumley became a truly legendary writer of gospel songs that include classics such as "I'll Fly Away," "I'll Meet You In The Morning," "If We Never Meet Again," and of course "Turn Your Radio On." Brumley is memorialized by membership in the Gospel Music Hall of Fame in Nashville. He tells about writing this song in 1937 when radio was relatively new to rural people and especially gospel music programs. His friends would call him and tell him to "turn your radio on Albert, they are playing one of your songs." Thus a classic was born.

This era of growth for the fledgling broadcast radio industry was in part fueled by the eventual spreading of the electric power grid across the nation, especially the rural areas of America. This combination facilitated the spread of information in a way never before experienced in the history of man. Radio became known as the "theater of the mind." Families gathered around their radios to listen to their favorite stories and shows, and the power of radio was evidenced by Orson Welles broadcast of the H. G. Wells classic "War of the Worlds" on October 30, 1938. News, sports, entertainment, and information became available, captivated a nation, and inspired many others to great possibilities that might lie before us.

Although of an older generation, the idea of a radio being a way of receiving information certainly impacted one of our Masonic brothers, a most interesting brother by the name of Joseph Sado. Although Sadony was well known to scientists, philosophers, and world leaders (included among his correspondents were Gandhi, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Rudyard Kipling, King Gustav V of Sweden, King George VI of England, and Admiral Byrd), he avoided personal publicity and was little known to the general public.²

What is perhaps most unique about this man is that he once walked 1,800 miles across Arizona at the bequest of President Theodore Roosevelt to inspect conditions among the Indians, performed on the flying trapeze for P. T. Barnum, bicycled from Chicago to the Gulf of Mexico via Denver, could hold his breath underwater for 3 minutes and 45 seconds, and is credited with saving 28 people from drowning.³ Beyond even all of this was his exceptional capability as a philosopher, teacher, and spiritualist who studied every religion in the world but remained a devout Christian. This philosopher-scientist

had a verified ability to see into the future and was paid a retainer by the Chicago and Detroit Police Departments to assist them in their criminal investigations. Sadony attributed his ability to make accurate predictions about the future as a gift from God and believed that this was a capacity that all human beings possessed if they would learn to come in touch with their own inner powers.

In the Introduction to his 1948 book, *Gates of The Mind*, Sadony says:

"Man slowly approaches the epoch of the human radio. His antenna of imagination opens that inner ear that hears the silent broadcast of the ages. It still vibrates in the atmosphere. Man's mortal ear already hears the music and the words..."⁴

Conceptually, this should be a well established principle for a Mason. The Stairway Lecture in the Fellowcraft Degree teaches that imagination is one of the active powers of the mind, and all Master Masons are charged that the great principles of moral truth and moral government originated in the Divine Mind, were breathed into the ear of Adam, and are still today constantly whispered in our ears in a still, small voice and in language all may comprehend.

Sadony's words are certainly an eloquent way of expressing this concept, and no one should be surprised to learn that it was written by a man who began his Masonic career at the turn of the twentieth century. During this period, a new Mason would surely have been introduced to the works and writings of Masonic writers such as Albert Mackey and Albert Pike. Sadony's Masonic career included mastership of Montague Lodge No. 198 F.&A.M., life membership in Whitehall Lodge No. 310, Eastern Star, life membership in Muskegon Commandery No. 22 Knights Templar, life membership in Saladin Temple AAONMS, and membership in DeWitt Clinton Consistory, Grand Rapids.⁵ He continues in the Introduction by saying:

"We forget that a well-governed and trustworthy imagination contains the tools that make education from the specifications of wisdom; that therein also are the antennae of man with which he searches for God; that aerial to receive the message; the chamber of transformation in which the 'word is made flesh'; where thoughts are dramatized in symbols that are revelations if they be attuned to 'facts'."⁶

Sadony would have us believe that each of us is a "Human Radio" enabled to receive all the signals, all the messages being sent out across the universe. Just like the little table radio that was on Mama's kitchen counter, we simply had to turn the dial to tune the receiver and discover what mysteries, what happiness, what entertainment would be brought to us as it received the signals being broadcast across the vast expanse. Just think about that whole entire, unseen variety of content that is available by simply turning on the radio and then being able to access it all. Sometimes we cannot pickup the signal, sometimes the signal fades but then returns, sometimes it is in a language that we do not understand, yet it is there for us.

Thinking in this manner really makes a lot of sense when you stop and think about it. Our minds, we are told, are working constantly at either a conscious or subconscious

level. The active powers of the mind compete for dominance, so we almost have a gate keeping function which tries to regulate the inputs and thus which of the active powers are so to speak 'in control' of our mind. Sometimes we have to tune out perception and stop those outward senses which require a lot of computing power to diagnose and prescribe courses of action. Each day we need a time of relaxation and rest to energize our minds. During those times our subconscious takes charge and keeps us aware of sensory changes but lets the powers of the active mind rest while the subconscious comes out to "play." That's why it is not uncommon to wake up in the morning with some fresh or important idea or thought which needs to be written down quickly before it goes away.

Consider for a moment the actions we take when we need to let our subconscious take control of things and not be acting under the influences of the various elements of the active mind. We retreat to a deserted place, we shut our eyes, we stop up our ears, we discard the exercise of our senses, and so the active mind is put to rest and awakens the subconscious as we try to gain contact with an answer or solution not presently available. We purposefully attempt to imitate sleep and go into various stages of relaxation, trance, or meditation. We turn our radio on. Yes, we turn our radio on to the ideas of the universe, to the possibilities that lie out there and are beyond our comprehension except to know that they are surely there. Can it be possible that the wisdom of the ages is available to us? There is so much evidence of highly tuned senses that seem to have had the ability to tune into that universal cosmos. Humans and even animals have shown the ability to sense medical conditions, weather phenomena, and an extensive list of surprising realities.

Like the simple little gospel song advises, "turn the lights down low, tune your radio in," and listen to the songs of

mom and dad and the friends gone on before and most of all that music which is in the air. It's not difficult, the songs and the music are the wisdom of the ages; learn the truth about man, God, and the universe. "Seek the truth," Sadony said, "and when you find it, follow it, for it is God."⁷ Turn Your Radio On.

End Notes

1 Brumley, Albert E. "Turn Your Radio On" Hartford Music Co., 1937

2 www.valleyofthepines.com/about.htm

3 LeMieux, Dave, "A Mind of His Own" Muskegon Chronicle, Aug 5, 2005

4 Sadony, Joseph, Gates of the Mind, 2d Ed, 1948, p. 12

5 www.valleyofthepines.com/about.htm

6 Sadony, Op cit, p. 12

7 [www.valley ofthepines.com/about.htm](http://www.valleyofthepines.com/about.htm)

Sir Knight Venable is a member of Lookout Commandery No. 14 in Chattanooga, Tennessee, resides at 131 Kirksey Dr., Ocoee, TN 37361, and can be contacted at: jvenable@jvenable.com.
